

[Interview of 30 Jan 1963]

During crisis, KSR said to me: "I think the Executive Committee put the chance of nuclear war very low, though they still may overestimate it 100 times; they may put it at 1 in a 100." [10? see below: "1/1000" times]

[Oct 29, 1962]

But shortly after, Putze told him he had put chance of some form of nuclear war fairly high. KSR asked, what subj. prob? Putze: 1 in 10. And he was low in the group.

KSR: If these people put the chance of nuclear war that high in that situation — he would have said, 1 in 100 — you can imagine what they think the consequences of using a nuclear weapon would be.

It would take a very great deal to make KSR or McN use a nuclear weapon. When McN came back from Berlin, having "spoken his feet to the wall and said we were ready to use nuclear," Bundy asked him, "Why do you say irrational things like that?" McN: "I have to tell we are built up our conventional forces."

[But note Bundy memo on crisis: need for real nuclear threat in Berlin crisis]

[Notebook of 20 Jan 1963]

During crisis, HSR said to me: "I think the Executive Committee put the chance of nuclear very low, though they still may overestimate it 100 times¹; they may put it at 1 in a 100." [10? see below: "1/1000" times]

[Oct 29, 1962]

But shortly after, Nitzze told him he had put chance of some form of nuclear war fairly high ^{if we had struck missiles}. HSR asked, what subj. prob.? Nitzze: 1 in 10. And he was low in the group.

HSR: If these people put the chance of nuclear war that high in that situation — he would have said, 1 in a 1000 — you can imagine what they think the consequences of using a nuclear weapon would be.

It would take a very great deal to make VFK or McN use a nuclear weapon. When McN came back from Berlin, having 'shaken his fist at the Wall and said we were ready to use nuclear,' Bundy asked him, "Why do you say irrational things like that?" McN: "I have to tell us we built up our conventional forces." [But note Bundy memo in crisis: need for only nuclear threat in Berlin crisis!]